



GOVERNOR'S EXECUTIVE ORDER EXPANDS STATEWIDE FIREFIGHTING CAPABILITIES

Summer temperatures, high winds, dry vegetation and the state's geography all make California extremely vulnerable to wildfires. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) declared the start of fire season earlier in June, and today the Governor joins firefighters at the Ryan Air Attack Base in Hemet to sign an Executive Order to expand the state's firefighting capabilities. Governor Schwarzenegger will also recognize the extraordinary service performed by firefighters, who risk their own lives to keep California's residents, property and natural resources safe.

The Governor's Executive Order puts additional resources at the ready to save lives and homes statewide.

- Governor Schwarzenegger's order applies to all of California, and directs the CDF to:
 - Secure and deploy additional personnel, including staff for two new CDF fire crews and increased numbers of fire inspectors and lookouts. The Executive Order also directs the CDF to assign a minimum of four fire crews to engines in high-risk areas, and to increase staffing for public education and awareness programs.
 - Work with the military to secure resources that could be made available during an emergency.
 - Increase dispatch and command functions so that firefighters can get to fires quickly and efficiently.
 - Expedite clearance inspections and the distribution of federal funds to local communities.
- The Executive Order also directs:
 - The National Guard to make aircraft, helicopters and equipment firefighting-ready.
 - The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to make low-risk inmates available to staff conservation camp crews.
 - The Office of Emergency Services (OES) to deploy fire engine strike teams as conditions warrant.
 - Collaboration between CDF, OES, state, federal and local governments in California, bordering states and Mexico to maximize fire prevention and firefighting capabilities.

The Governor has increased total funds for fire prevention and firefighting by nearly \$150 million.

- Total funding has increased from \$601.9 in 2002-03 to \$745.7 million in 2005-06.
- His 2005-06 budget included funds for 19 new CDF fire engines and \$5 million for the first installment purchase of 150 new engines, as recommended by the Blue Ribbon Fire Commission report for use by local governments.

He implemented the Blue Ribbon Fire Commission recommendations to upgrade equipment, communications, and staff resources.

- In July 2005, the Governor signed Executive Order S-06-05, which carries out recommendations made by the Governor's Blue Ribbon Fire Commission, devoting:
 - \$10.8 million to replace aging CDF fire engines and helicopters
 - \$9 million for year-round staffing at fire-season levels in San Diego, Riverside and San Bernardino.
 - \$2.9 million for state-of-the-art radio equipment, facilitating clear communication between CDF, federal and local officials.

Governor Schwarzenegger has supported many bills to improve the state's fire safety.

- Laws now allow homes to have 100-feet of brush clearance, cigarettes sold in-state must meet safety standards, tire pile fires are regulated and state building codes enable better fire screens, among other important fire safety reforms.

California is ready for fire season—are you?

- Fire preparedness is everyone's responsibility. California's catastrophic 2003 fire season caused nearly \$1 billion in damages and destroyed more than 5,000 structures. The Governor urges all Californians to prepare their homes inside and out for the possibility of a fire. The CDF website (http://www.fire.ca.gov/php/education_checklist.php) provides [information and checklists](#) to help Californians get ready for fire season.

For more information

[Governor Schwarzenegger's record on disaster preparedness](#)

[The Governor's Blue Ribbon Fire Commission](#)